

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the foregoing, claim 24 has been amended and claim 23 has been canceled. No claims have been added. No new matter is being presented, and approval and entry are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-22 and 24-25 are pending and under consideration. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

ALLOWED CLAIMS

The Applicants acknowledge with appreciation that claims 1-22 and 25 have been allowed.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102

In the Office Action, at page 2, claim 23 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) in view of U.S. Patent No. 2003/0163286 by Yasugi et al. The reasons for the rejection are set forth in the Office Action and therefore not repeated. Claim 23 has been cancelled.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Applicants acknowledge with appreciation that claim 24 has been found to contain allowable subject matter. The Applicants have amended claim 24 to be rewritten in independent form.

The Applicants note that claim 24, when it was in dependent form, contained what they believe was an obvious clerical error. Specifically, Claim 24 read:

The method as recited in **claim 15**...

However, a review of the substance of claims 15, 23, and 24 confirms that claim 24 was intended to depend from claim 23. It appears that both the Examiner and the Applicant proceeded as such during examination.

CONCLUSION

In accordance with the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all outstanding objections and rejections have been overcome and/or rendered moot. And further, that all pending claims patentably distinguish over the prior art. Thus, there being no further outstanding objections or rejections, the application is submitted as being in condition for allowance which action is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner has any remaining issues to be addressed, it is believed that prosecution can be expedited by the Examiner contacting the undersigned attorney for a telephone interview to discuss resolution of such issues.

If there are any underpayments or overpayments of fees associated with the filing of this Amendment, please charge and/or credit the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.


Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

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